

APOLOGETIC.



QUITE unexpectedly, and much against our will, we found it necessary at the last moment to add a Professor of Apologetics to our faculty. That functionary now steps forward to say a word in extenuation of some shortcomings in our first number. These will be chiefly apparent to experts in typography, but as we know the members of this class of the community to be highly sensitive, we are all the more sorry to have hurt their feelings. There were some errors in matters of registration, and a good many of the earlier copies were "off-set;" then the folding and

binding were in a portion of the edition painfully short of perfection. For all these deficiencies our Professor hereby tenders a comprehensive apology, coupled with the hope that "it won't happen again." In justice to our printers it is right to explain that the time allowed them for doing the work on the first number was too short, and this again was because of many unforeseen things coming up to retard the editorial work. We are gratified at the very kind reception accorded the new GRIP, notwithstanding these things, and will not abate our ambition to make the paper in every way equal to the high ideal we cherish.



THINGS ARE IN A BAD STATE.

A REPORTORIAL NEW YEAR'S STORY.

IT was shortly after midnight of December 31st, 1893. A reporter on the staff of the Daily Disseminator sat at his desk awaiting the return of the night editor, who had gone out to wish his New Year's resolutions the compliments of the season.

A footstep in the corridor aroused him, and the next moment the door opened and an old gentleman with long white hair and whiskers entered the sanctum.

The reporter eyed him with some curiosity. "It's a little late for Santa Claus," he said to himself, "or I should consider myself down for a Christmas box." But aloud he only said:

"How do you do, sir—come in."

The visitor acknowledged the salutation, advanced to a chair at the end of the desk, seated himself and gazed benignantly at the reporter.

"Anything new with you to-night?" queried the reporter, scenting a possible item.

"I lost one of my youngsters to-night," replied the owner of the white hair and whiskers.

"Oh, is that so!" sympathetically exclaimed the reporter. "I am very sorry, sir. What was the trouble?"

"Just wasted away," said the bereaved parent. "They all do."

"Ah! You have lost other children then?"

"Thousands of them," was the startling answer. The reporter stared.

"I beg pardon?" he questioned at length, "did you say thousands?"

The visitor nodded as coolly as though he were making the most commonplace statement possible.

"Ah!" The reporter was puzzled. "How old was the child?" He asked the question more through force of habit in such cases than from any well defined motive.

"Twelve months," replied the venerable father of thousands.

"How very sad! Your own child, did you say?"

"Yes—one of my own."

"Have you a large family, sir?"

"Only one left now."

"You have been unfortunate, indeed," said the reporter.

"I trust the survivor is healthy?"

"Can't tell yet," said the old man. "It was only born to-night."

"The deuce!" ejaculated the amazed reporter. And then—"I beg you pardon."

"Yes," repeated the old man, "just born to-night."

"I hope the child and its mother are doing well?" ventured the reporter, while trying to recover his mental balance.

"It hasn't any mother," placidly rejoined the old man.

"What! You don't mean that she's dead?"

"No. I didn't say that."

The reporter took a good long look at his visitor. "This thing," he said to himself, "is getting serious."

"Is it a boy?" he presently ventured to ask.

"Well—no."

"Ah! Well—I don't know but I like girls best, anyhow." This with an attempt at cheerfulness.

"Did I say it was a girl?" queried the other.

"No. But you said it wasn't a boy."

"I don't think I'd say it was a girl," calmly observed the old man, caressing his long whiskers. "I don't think I'd say that."

"Oh!" The reporter was rapidly getting beyond his depth. Here was an infant, the last of thousands, whose father said it was not a boy and would not say it was a girl. There did not seem to be any reasonable way out of the difficulty. The old man was certainly sober.

"By Jove!" A sudden thought struck the reporter. "The man must be a lunatic!" he said to himself. "Why, of course. Why didn't I think of it before? He's as crazy as a coot!"

"Excuse me a moment," he said to the old man, and getting up he hurried into another room and held a brisk business interview by telephone with the asylum authorities and the police. Then he returned to his room, but he found it empty. The old gentleman had decamped, but upon the table the mystified reporter found a card, upon which was neatly printed:

COMPLIMENTS OF
OLD FATHER TIME.
1893-94.

This is the story as the reporter himself tells it. Some persons venture occasionally to express incredulity, but if they do so in the hero's presence he is able to produce the card as proof of his veracity. This usually settles it, as the newspaper man is champion amateur heavyweight of the town and hates to be called a liar. A. M. B.

A STRICTLY PERSONAL QUESTION—Have you yet subscribed for GRIP?